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Frederick County Health Department

# *News Release*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**AUGUST 3, 2021**

## **Alcohol Merchant Sales Compliance Check Update**

**FREDERICK, MD --** In an effort to protect public health and promote health and wellness among our youth, the Frederick County Health Department's Merchant Sales Compliance Initiative aims to reduce minors' access to alcohol and tobacco products by conducting random merchant compliance checks of businesses located in Frederick County. Funding for these activities is provided by the Maryland Department of Health.

Tobacco and alcohol use by minors can harm their physical health and impair healthy brain development. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, nearly 90 percent of adult smokers began smoking before age 18. Additionally, according to the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), by age 18, about 60 percent of teens reported having at least one drink of alcohol. Environmental strategies, including policy and enforcement efforts, are identified as effective strategies to prevent the misuse of alcohol and

**--more--**

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tobacco by youth, according to the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

In Frederick County, underage individuals assist in the execution of both alcohol and tobacco merchant compliance checks. All underage individuals possess their valid state-issued driver's license or identification card, which is provided to every merchant who asks for identification. If the merchant asks the individual their age, the individual is required to reply truthfully. All underage individuals are accompanied and observed by a plainclothes officer.

On June 24, 2021, alcohol merchants were checked for compliance with local alcohol sales laws. During this round of compliance checks, 23 business that sell or serve alcohol were checked, 2 of which sold alcohol to the underage individuals. These violations were referred to the Frederick County Liquor Board for administrative review. [Click here](#) for the complete report of businesses checked and the results.

For more information about the Frederick County Health Department, Merchant Sales Compliance Initiative, call 301-600-1755 or visit

<https://health.frederickcountymd.gov/557/Merchant-Compliance-Initiative>

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